Expert Committee already constituted by the Government of Tamil Nadu to substitute Rule 51of Tamil Nadu Educational Rules dealing with issue of corporal punishment, by a set of guidelines of self discipline entailing certain corrective actions on the part of erring students.

(b) India is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which provides for protection of children from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. One of the recent initiatives that Government has taken is the adoption of a National Charter for Children which has been prepared keeping in view of the provisions of the UN Convention. The Charter provides for protection of children from physical punishment in schools.

Tamil language

213. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have agreed in principle to declare Tamil as a classical language; and

(b) what steps Government are taking to spread the ancient Tamil language throughout the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) The Government have stated in their Common Minimum Programme that the UPA Government will set up a committee to examine the question of declaring all languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as official languages. In addition, Tamil will be declared as a classical language.

(b) The Government is committed to fulfilling its obligation of promoting and developing all Indian languages including Tamil through its various agencies such as a Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore, National Book Trust (NBT) and Sahitya Akademi etc. which implement several schemes for the purpose. CIIL, Mysore provides financial assistance for publication and purchase of Tamil books, trained teachers from States and Union Territories in Tamil through a 10 months intensive programme. It also runs distance learning programmes in Tamil for the general public. Several foreign nationals have also been given training in Tamil by CIIL. CIIL supports research projects related to the development of Tamil besides organizing various orientation programmes and refresher courses in Tamil. CIIL has also developed language evaluation tools in Tamil for the Government of Singapore.

Both Sahitya Akademi and NBT have widely published Tamil works and their translations. NBT participates in various international books fairs where Tamil boods are also displayed alongwith books from other Indian languages. Sahitya Akademi has been inviting Tamil writers for its seminars and workshops at international and national levels. Sahitya Akademi has elected Tamil writers its Fellows and has given awards to several authors of Tamil books. It has also given translation prizes for Tamil works.

Poverty among women

†214. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poverty among women is increasing day by day;

(b) whether Government are going to formulate any comprehensive action plan for eradication of poverty among women working in the informal area;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) The estimates of poverty are not made at gender disaggregated level by the Planning Commission, which is the nodal agency in the Government in charge of poverty estimation.

(b) The following schemes are being implemented by the Government of India to address issues relating to poverty alleviation among workers in the informal area including that of women in the country, namely:

A. Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation

1. Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY);
2. The Urban Self Employment Programme (USEP);
3. The Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP);

B. Ministry of Rural Development

4. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY);
5. Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY);
6. Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY);

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.